CULTURE MUST HAVE A BACKGROUND

FROM one who has for years been using voice and pen incessantly in behalf of a distinctive and independent culture of the Southwest, free from domination of the northeastern section of our country, as well as from the sentimental domination of the "South", what follows may seem a little different, though it is certainly not self-contradictory.

Whatever we do here must not only be genuine and organic, instead of merely artificial, but if it is to be worth anything it must also have an adequate background. We cannot afford to scrap the past or to cut loose from the cultural achievements of the race. Once our local Little The-

ater yielded to the plea that trivial selections for performance give place to something worthier, and *Beyond the Horizon* by Eugene O'Neill was attempted. Local talent did surprisingly well, but what a disheartening response! At the most intense and solemn moments the audience burst into roars of laughter, amused at seeing individuals whom they knew personally in such serious rôles and apparently taking it all for comedy, confident that everything would come out all right in the end, as in the movies. One wanted to rush from the building.

Nevertheless, the people of West Texas are eager for training in the arts. When it was proposed to establish a large institution of higher learning in this section, the effort was made, and is still being strenuously made, to give it a prevailingly technological character. But from the very start to the present the School of Liberal Arts has contained more students than all the other Schools put together. It was assumed that there would be no demand for Latin, but place had to be made for it. No provision was made for philosophy, but this has been a subject much desired, especially by advanced and graduate students, though at this writing not a cent has ever been appropriated for its maintenance. So far the authorities have been unable to see any demand for Greek, but although this writer feels himself already somewhat overburdened with other duties, he has yielded to importunities and now has a vigorous, enthusiastic, voluntary, non-credit Greek class of sixteen, meeting twice a week at his house. And this in "the Great American Desert"!

The rebuilding of Santa Fé in accordance with definite architectural standards of traditional æsthetic value shows what intelligent guidance may do; but in general if we give our people access to the richest cultural acquisitions of the race, they will do the choosing and will develop their own distinctive culture in their own way.

Lubbock. JOHN C. GRANBERY.